

Noxious weeds are a big problem

Nearly 4.5 million acres are infested. Statewide losses from noxious weeds exceed \$80 million annually. The acreage and cost will continue to increase unless those responsible take action to control and eradicate noxious weeds on the land.

Noxious weed characteristics

A weed must possess the following characteristics to be declared noxious statewide:

Noxious Weeds Of South Dakota

- The weed is perennial
- The weed has unique capability to spread rapidly
- The weed is not controllable without special prevention or management
- The weed is capable of decreasing the value of land
- The weed is capable of materially reducing the production of crops or livestock
- The weed is not native to South Dakota

Local Noxious Weeds

Counties may request that weeds may be designated locally noxious, this request must be approved by the South Dakota Weed and Pest Control Commission. Local noxious weeds have the following characteristics:

- The weed is biennial, perennial, or a pernicious annual.
- The weed is capable of spreading rapidly.
- The weed is not controllable without special preventative or management practices
- The weed is capable of materially reducing production of crops and livestock
- The weed is capable of decreasing the value of the land



Musk Thistle

Weed: Local noxious. Biennial
Leaves: Coarsely toothed, dark green with white midrib. Spine-tipped lobes.
Stems: 4-6 feet tall. Stout, wing-like growth.
Flowers: Large, 2-inch, powder-puff shape. Deep rose to lavender, borne singularly, nodding on curved stem.
Roots: Heavy, branching taproot. Forms rosette first season.
Sites: Pastures, range trees, along creeks and dunes.



Canada Thistle

Weed: Noxious statewide. Creeping perennial.
Leaves: Smooth, medium green, spine-tipped, crinkled margin. Smaller than biennial thistle.
Stems: 2 to 5 feet tall, grooved, branching at top.
Flowers: Numerous flowers on branched heads. About ¾ inch. Usually lavender may be pink or white. Separate male and female flowers.
Roots: 10 to 15 feet deep.
Sites: Grows in all cultivated crops, pastures, ranges, trees and wetlands.
Notes: Capable of rapid spread. Seed matures 7 to 10 days after first flower color.

The Law Can Be Enforced

The South Dakota Weed and Pest Control Commission is responsible for developing and implementing a statewide control program. South Dakota statute requires every landowner to control noxious weeds on their land. Voluntary compliance is encouraged.

State law provides enforcement procedures used when landowners fail to comply. The laws and regulations are enforced by the South Dakota Department of Agriculture. Failure to comply initiates a formal process that could result in fines, tax levies, and liens against the lands of the owner.

Uncontrolled noxious weeds that present a nuisance to area lands should be reported to county weed and pest officials.

The information provided in this sheet was taken from "Noxious Weeds in South Dakota—Extension Special Series 34," by Leon J. Wrage and Darrell L. Deneke, and published by the South Dakota State University College of Agriculture and Biological Sciences—United States Department of Agriculture.